UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/49/698
28 November 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-ninth session
Agenda item 61

PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Peter GOOSEN (South Africa)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" was included in the provisional agenda of the forty-ninth session in accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/74 A of 16 December 1993.

2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 23 September 1994, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.

3. At its 2nd meeting, on 13 October, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely, items 53 to 66, 68 to 72 and 153. The deliberations on those items took place at the 3rd to 10th meetings, from 17 to 24 October (see A/C.1/49/PV.3-10). Structured discussions of specific subjects on the adopted thematic approach took place from 25 to 27 and on 31 October and 1 November. Consideration of draft resolutions on those items took place at the 12th to 16th meetings, on 3, 4, 7 and 9 November (see A/C.1/49/PV.12-16). Action on draft resolutions on those items took place at the 19th to 25th meetings, from 14 to 18 November (see A/C.1/49/PV.19-25).

4. In connection with item 61, the First Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Conference on Disarmament; 1/

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 27 (A/49/27).

(b) Letter dated 25 June 1994 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt to the Secretary-General transmitting the texts of the documents adopted by the Eleventh Ministerial Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Cairo from 31 May to 3 June 1994 (A/49/287-S/1994/894 and Corr.1).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.1/49/L.15

5. On 31 October, Algeria, Bolivia, Brazil, China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Sri Lanka, Ukraine and Venezuela submitted a draft resolution entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" (A/C.1/49/L.15), which was later also sponsored by Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Myanmar and Viet Nam. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Egypt at the 15th meeting, on 9 November.

6. At its 19th meeting, on 14 November, the Committee voted on draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.15 as follows:

(a) The eighteenth preambular paragraph was adopted by a recorded vote of 98 to 1, with 41 abstentions. The voting was as follows: 2/

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Albania, Andorra, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Eritrea, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel,

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2/ Subsequently, the delegations of Djibouti and Paraguay indicated that they had intended to vote in favour.

Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

(b) Operative paragraph 8 was adopted by a recorded vote of 97 to 1, with 40 abstentions. The voting was as follows: 2/

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Albania, Andorra, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

(c) Operative paragraph 10 was adopted by a recorded vote of 87 to 1, with 51 abstentions. The voting was as follows: 2/

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar,

Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Eritrea, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

(d) At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.15, as a whole, by a recorded vote of 140 to none, with 2 abstentions (see para. 7). The voting was as follows: 2/

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and

Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Marshall Islands, United States of America.

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

7. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Prevention of an arms race in outer space

The General Assembly,

Recognizing the common interest of all mankind in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes,

Reaffirming the will of all States that the exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, shall be for peaceful purposes, shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interest of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and shall be the province of all mankind,

Reaffirming also provisions of articles III and IV of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, 3/

Recalling the obligation of all States to observe the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations regarding the use or threat of use of force in their international relations, including in their space activities,

Reaffirming further paragraph 80 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, 4/ in which it is stated that in order to prevent an arms race in outer space further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations held in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty,

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3/ Resolution 2222 (XXI), annex.

4/ Resolution S-10/2.

Recalling also its previous resolutions on this issue and the Final Document adopted by the Tenth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Jakarta from 1 to 6 September 1992, 5/ and taking note of the proposals submitted to the General Assembly at its tenth special session and at its regular sessions, and of the recommendations made to the competent organs of the United Nations and to the Conference on Disarmament,

Recognizing the grave danger for international peace and security of an arms race in outer space and of developments contributing to it,

Emphasizing the paramount importance of strict compliance with existing arms limitation and disarmament agreements relevant to outer space, including bilateral agreements, and with the existing legal regime concerning the use of outer space,

Considering that wide participation in the legal regime applicable to outer space could contribute to enhancing its effectiveness,

Noting that bilateral negotiations, begun in 1985 between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, were conducted with the declared objective of working out effective agreements aimed, inter alia, at preventing an arms race in outer space,

Welcoming the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space at the 1994 session of the Conference on Disarmament, in the exercise of the negotiating responsibilities of this sole multilateral body on disarmament, to continue to examine and identify, through substantive and general consideration, issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space,

Noting also that the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, taking into account its previous efforts since its establishment in 1985 and seeking to enhance its functioning in qualitative terms, continued the examination and identification of various issues, existing agreements and existing proposals, as well as future initiatives relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, 6/ and that this contributed to a better understanding of a number of problems and to a clearer perception of the various positions,

Emphasizing the mutually complementary nature of bilateral and multilateral efforts in the field of preventing an arms race in outer space, and hoping that concrete results will emerge from those efforts as soon as possible,

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5/ See A/47/675-S/24816, annex, chap. II, para. 45; see Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-seventh Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1992, document S/24816.

6/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 27 (A/48/27), para. 37 (para. 5 of the quoted text).

Convinced that further measures should be examined in the search for effective and verifiable bilateral and multilateral agreements in order to prevent an arms race in outer space,

Stressing that the growing use of outer space increases the need for greater transparency and better information on the part of the international community,

Recalling in this context its previous resolutions, in particular resolutions 45/55 B of 4 December 1990, 47/51 of 9 December 1992 and 48/74 A of 16 December 1993, in which, inter alia, it reaffirmed the importance of confidence-building measures as means conducive to ensuring the attainment of the objective of the prevention of an arms race in outer space,

Conscious of the benefits of confidence- and security-building measures in the military field,

Recognizing that there was wide agreement in the Ad Hoc Committee that the conclusion of an international agreement or agreements to prevent an arms race in outer space remained the fundamental task of the Committee and that the concrete proposals on confidence-building measures could form an integral part of such agreements,

1. Reaffirms the importance and urgency of preventing an arms race in outer space and the readiness of all States to contribute to that common objective, in conformity with the provisions of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies;

2. Reaffirms its recognition, as stated in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, that the legal regime applicable to outer space by itself does not guarantee the prevention of an arms race in outer space, that this legal regime plays a significant role in the prevention of an arms race in that environment, that there is a need to consolidate and reinforce that regime and enhance its effectiveness, and that it is important strictly to comply with existing agreements, both bilateral and multilateral;

3. Emphasizes the necessity of further measures with appropriate and effective provisions for verification to prevent an arms race in outer space;

4. Calls upon all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the objective of the peaceful use of outer space and of the prevention of an arms race in outer space and to refrain from actions contrary to that objective and to the relevant existing treaties in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international cooperation;

5. Reiterates that the Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has the primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects;

6. Requests the Conference on Disarmament to consider as a matter of priority the question of preventing an arms race in outer space;

7. Also requests the Conference on Disarmament to intensify its consideration of the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects, building upon areas of convergence and taking into account relevant proposals and initiatives, including those presented in the Ad Hoc Committee at the 1994 session of the Conference and at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly;

8. Further requests the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish an ad hoc committee with an adequate mandate at the beginning of its 1995 session and to continue building upon areas of convergence, taking into account the work undertaken since 1985, with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in outer space in all its aspects;

9. Recognizes, in this respect, the growing convergence of views on the elaboration of measures designed to strengthen transparency, confidence and security in the peaceful uses of outer space;

10. Urges the Russian Federation and the United States of America to resume their bilateral negotiations with a view to reaching early agreement for preventing an arms race in outer space, and to advise the Conference on Disarmament periodically of the progress of their bilateral sessions so as to facilitate its work;

11. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fiftieth session the item entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".